

LOCAL TALK

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25¢

“LET’S TALK FOR THE BETTERMENT OF OUR COMMUNITIES”

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

ESSEX COUNTY • EAST ORANGE • ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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ORANGE MAYOR DWAYNE WARREN WINS HEATED ELECTION

Incumbents Win Majority of Other Local Elections

By Walter Elliott

ORANGE - A majority of participating registered voters here and in Irvington, Montclair, Belleville and Nutley returned most - but not all - incumbents to their public offices in May 14's nonpartisan municipal elections.

A majority of voters in Orange and Irvington handed brooms to the respective "Moving Orange Forward" and "Team Irvington Strong" teams to beat back their mayoral and council challengers.

Nutley voters handed brooms to each of their incumbent commissioners; all five ran individual campaigns.

Montclair more than selected their first African American woman for mayor Tuesday night. They also split their votes among two teams and four solo campaigners in a wholesale changeover of their municipal leadership.

Voters in two of Belleville's four wards favored independent candidates, preventing "A Better Belleville" sweep.

The following figures - posted at 10:01 p.m. Tuesday by Essex County Clerk Christopher Durkin's Election Division office in



Newark - remain unofficial until May 28.

The Clerk's Election Division office and the Essex County Board of Elections withhold election certification for two weeks to allow time for two reasons.

The fortnight traditionally allows time for any election challenges and recounts. The other reason is to allow the counting of provisional ballots and, before 4 p.m. May 17, Vote By Mail Ballots that have been post-marked or dropped off before 8 p.m. May

14.

The returns so far show that 17,934 voters among the five municipalities - from a registered pool of 137,077 - participated. The actual voters to the voter pool percentage comes out to 13.08 percent among the five towns.

The participation rate had dropped from the May 10, 2016 municipal elections' 14.50 percent. 17,293 voters from a pool of 119,243 took part then. (2020's results, due to COVID exposure concerns adding the otherwise April school board elections to the ballot, were not used for comparison.)

Only two of the county's 138 voting machines among the five towns' polling stations reported by 10 p.m. Tuesday. (No reason was given on why the two machines were not used as of press time.)

A majority of participating ORANGE voters granted Mayor Dwayne D. Warren a fourth consecutive term. The "Moving Orange Forward" ticket head received 1,508 votes for 56.17 percent of the vote.

West Ward Councilwoman and "A Voice for Orange" campaigner Quantavia L Hilbert carried 995 votes for 17.18 percent. Former Council President April Gaunt-Butler, running on her own "Community Continuity and Commitment" banner, garnered 178

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REPORT EXPOSES DEEP PROBLEMS AT NEWARK HOUSING AUTHORITY

By Lev D. Zilbermintz

An explosive 45-page report and a 22-page whistleblower lawsuit has exposed the corruption, lack of communication, lack of expertise, etc. at the Newark Housing Authority (NHA). This article, the first in a series, looks at the problems, the causes, proposed solutions and more.

The report was shared exclusively with "Local Talk" by a credible source. What follows is taken from the report and the lawsuit.

Former Executive Director Victor Cirilo's Role

According to the report, former Newark Housing Authority Executive Director Victor Cirilo is responsible for many of the problems that Newark Housing Authority now faces.

According to a May 4, 2023 TapIn-to.net story, the authority's board of commissioners on April 27, 2023 ended its contract with Victor Cirilo, who has

(Continued on page 4)



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Editorial
Dhiren Shah
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

The election in Orange, NJ was the talk of the town, and incumbent Mayor Dwayne Warren won a fourth term as Mayor. Congratulations to Mayor Dwayne Warren on his victory. He won by a comfortable lead of 19 percent. The voter turnout was still dismal in Orange though.

The number of municipalities that restrict mayors to 2 terms are 45%, 3 terms are 30%, and four terms are 9%, where term limits are imposed. The rest do not impose a term limit. However, for an incumbent, it is hard to win four terms, In the 2022 election, the total regis-

tered voter list in Orange was 18,462 and 4,320 residents cast their ballots. In 2020's Orange Mayoral election, 3,226 residents cast their ballots. This election, more people were talking about an election since Local Talk began in 2000. However, only 2,676 residents cast their ballots.

Congratulations to all the uncontested councilpersons on their election. Hopefully, all who won election will work in the best interest of the people.

Congratulations to Arts ED Newark for receiving a \$85,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. This grant will support their ongoing arts education collective impact project in Newark, New Jersey. In total, the NEA will award 1,135 Grants for Arts Projects awards totaling more than \$37 million as part of its second round of fiscal year 2024 grants.

Slovakian Prime Minister

Fico was shot multiple times, and is in life threatening condition as of 12 p.m. EDT May 15. and The Slovak Republic is located in Central Europe, sharing borders with Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Ukraine.

As per news outlet Barron: "The gunman who shot Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico multiple times and wounded him on Wednesday has been detained by the police, the country's president said. Police have detained the attacker and as soon as possible will give more information."

Zuzana Caputova, who is running against Fico, called the shooting on her political opponent an "attack on democracy" in a statement.

Donald Trump has accepted President Biden's offer to have two presidential debates. The first one will be on June 27, 2024 and the second one will be in

September 2024. It will be an interesting debate between Biden, who has age-related troubles, and Trump, who has legal troubles.

According to Fox News: "When asked for comment, Trump told Fox News Digital that he will accept and 'will be there.' The Republican added that he is "looking forward to being in beautiful Atlanta. The proposal was initially outlined by the Biden-Harris campaign in a letter to the bipartisan Commission on Presidential Debates on Wednesday morning. It abandoned the decades-old tradition of three fall meetings organized by the debate commission. Trump afterward told Fox News Digital that he'd accept the timeline proposed by the incumbent Democrat."

*Have a wonderful week.
 I'll talk to you next week.*

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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
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NHA REPORT

(Continued from page 1)

served as the authority’s executive director since 2017. Officials at the time confirmed this. Cirilo’s termination is “without cause” according to a resolution approved by the commissioners, the 2023 TapInto.net story said.

According to Cirilo’s biography on JVInvestment website, he is a cum laude graduate of Rutgers University Newark with a Master’s degree in Public Administration. Previously, Victor Cirilo served as the Director of Housing Authority of the City of Passaic. He closed the first HUD (Housing and Urban Development) Rental Assistance Demonstrating Program deals in New Jersey.

According to <https://www.jvinvestmentproperties.com/victor-cirilo-bio>, Cirilo has over 20 years of experience in the fields of affordable housing and public policy. He is an expert at leveraging private and public finance and at creating non-profit community housing development corporations, private affiliates, and identities of interest to manage these partnerships. Victor has

worked with agencies of all sizes and has leveraged numerous initiatives utilizing public housing capital funds, low income housing tax credits, community development block grants, developer fees, and HUD HOME funds.”

Unanswered Questions

The big question is, if Victor Cirilo has the experience cited in his biography, how did he allow numerous problems to occur at the Newark Housing Authority on his watch from 2017 - 2024? Another question is, were there problems at the Newark Housing Authority before Victor Cirilo became Executive Director? The answers will be given by “Local Talk” in a series of articles.

Victor Cirilo’s own biography offers a possible idea of his central management style. According to the website, <https://www.jvinvestmentproperties.com/victor-cirilo-bio>, he was at the time working on 24 different deals at the Newark Housing Authority. The fact that Mr. Cirilo was working on so many projects himself demonstrates a lack of delegating responsibility.

Foreword

According to the report’s Foreword, “The following report is the result of the Independent Assessment of the Newark Housing Authority (“NHA”) NJ002. The Assessment was required by the Department’s regulations relevant to Public Housing Authority (“PHA”) performance because the NHA was designated as “Troubled” on November 8, 2023 for its fiscal year ending December 31, 2022.

Members of a team of HUD staff assembled from the Northeast Network, collectively known as a Public Housing Authority Recovery and Sustainability (PHARS) Team, conducted the on-Site Assessment on February 13-16, 2024. This Assessment’s purpose is to determine the underlying causes of unacceptable performance outcomes as measured by HUD’s Public Housing Assessment System (PHARS), to gain a more comprehensive understanding of NHA’s operational viability, and to provide technical assistance. The observations and recommendations of this Assessment serve as the foundation for the development of strategies and plans for sustained improvement, codified as proposed terms for a Recovery Agreement between the Department and the NHA.

This Assessment included a discussion of the PHAS scores with key NHA staff, a review of documents and financial records, meetings and interviews with staff and members of the Board of Commissioners (“BOC”), sample unit inspections and a site tour. Members of the Team also reviewed recent Independent Public Accountant and Quality Assurance Division audits of the Newark Housing Authority.”

Executive Summary

Details Problems

According to the report, “This Assessment identified four principal issues that contribute to weaknesses in NHA’s administration of its Public Housing Program. These include:

- Inadequate oversight, management and tracking of critical “Financial Management” functions and indicators.
- Failure to adopt a budget that is within the current re-

sources of the agency.

- Inadequate oversight, management and knowledge of property management functions including compliance with HUD rules and regulations.
- Inadequate oversight, management, and knowledge of HCV Program.

According to the report, NHA’s recent PHAS scores left much to be desired. Executive Director Leonard Spicer, who replaced Victor Cirilo on October 30, 2023, told the NHA’s Board of Commissioners what the scores meant. TapInto.net reported in its November 17, 2023 online edition what Executive Director Spicer told the Board of Commissioners at their November meeting.

According to Spicer, as reported by TapInto.net, the NHA scored 22 out of 40 points in the category of “physical conditions.” The points are weighted to consider the insides of units as opposed to the exterior of buildings. This includes plumbing and electrical facilities, and the presence of “water intrusions,” Spicer told the commissioners.

In the category of finance, officials said, the agency scored a zero. Spicer said this was largely a result of NHA failing to turn its audits into the federal government in a timely fashion and that the agency would request an extension.

In the category of “management”, Spicer said, the authority scored a zero. To pass, the agency must ensure that it has above 93% occupancy, he said.

“We need to make sure are leasing our units,” Spicer said. “Having 87% occupancy is not acceptable in a community where we have thousands of people who need housing.”

TapInto.net also reported that rent was not collected in a timely fashion.

As reported by TapInto.net, Spicer said that in the category of capital funds, the NHA scored five out of 10 points. According to TapInto.net, “the failing score is because the agency had not spent its federal grant funding in a timely fashion.”

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SPORTS WRAP



Photo By Felicia Laguerre Owens

By William Hathaway, Jr.

Orange’s Recreation Department along with the Orange Public Schools hosted their annual Elementary League Basketball Championship games this past weekend at Orange High School.

The 4th and 5th grade division championship game saw the Heywood Avenue Wildcats lose to the tough Lincoln Ave-

members.

In the 6th and 7th grade title game, Oakwood Avenue School defeated Heywood Avenue 48-21. Panthers player Julian Faison who played on the Lincoln Avenue panthers team Faison said it feels very good on winning a championship by working together and believing in themselves as a whole team all coaches was giving appreciation awards for coaching there teams



Photo By Felicia Laguerre Owens

nue Panthers 19-18 in a game that went down to the wire. Heywood was down early, but went on a comeback, falling just short at the end. Lincoln Avenue has won back to back championships.

Between the two championship games it was a 3 on 3 basketball game. Meanwhile, Orange resident James Summers was honored with a lifetime achievement award for his dedication to the Orange community in the presence of his family

In other sports, the New York Red Bulls are charging strong. This past Saturday, NY won a key game at home in Harrison over the New England Revolution 4-2. In the first half, Lewis Morgan kicked off the scoring for the Red Bulls, followed by Gil Charles who tied the game for the Revolution at 1-1. Then, Emil Forsberg put the Bulls on top 2-1, followed up by a score from teammate Elias Manoel to make it 3-1. Vironi Giacomo cut New England’s



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Photos By Felicia Laguerre Owens

deficit to 3-2. Late in the second half, Cameron Harper gave NY some insurance to make it 4-2.

The New York Red Bulls are now 5-2-5, and has extended their home unbeaten streak to eight matches.

Head coach Sandro Schwarz said on the victory, “We won against a good opponent. They have good quality and very good players.”





UNITED STATES



MACHETE MAN GETS 27 YEARS

Trevor Bickford, 20, of Wells, Maine, was sentenced to 324 months in prison for attempting to kill officers and employees of the U.S. Government and persons assisting them during his brazen attack using a machete-style knife against three New York City Police Department (NYPD) officers in Times Square on Dec. 31, 2022. Bickford pleaded guilty to terrorism charges on Jan. 11.

According to court documents: In December 2022, Bickford, a U.S. citizen and resident of Maine, traveled from Maine to New York City to, in his own words, wage jihad and kill as many targets as possible. He targeted one of the most densely populated areas in the United States at one of the most densely populated times possible: Times Square on New Year's Eve.

It was there that Bickford ambushed three NYPD officers, declared "Allahu Akbar," an Arabic phrase meaning "God is great" that other radical Islamic extremists have similarly proclaimed while carrying out terrorist attacks, and swung his blade at their heads, seriously injuring all three officers. Bickford also tried to grab one of the NYPD officers' guns during his attack. One of the victims that Bickford struck managed to shoot Bickford in the shoulder,

halting his brutal rampage before he could attack and possibly kill others. Bickford later proudly declared that he carried out his attack to wage jihad and proclaimed that his goal was to kill as many military-aged men who worked for the U.S. Government as he could, before himself becoming a martyr in the attack.

Bickford's violent rampage on Dec. 31, 2022, was premeditated. He consumed materials espousing radical Islamic ideology - including materials promoting the Taliban and reflecting the teachings of Sheikh Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, a prominent radical Islamic cleric who was a spiritual mentor of al Qaeda - and contemplated ways to wage jihad. As he immersed himself deeper into this propaganda, Bickford devoted himself to violent Islamic extremism and pursuit of the jihad that he would eventually unleash in the heart of New York City.

In the months leading up to his attack, Bickford focused on traveling overseas to support the Taliban in Afghanistan or elsewhere. He planned to ally himself with the Taliban to fight against governments that, in his view, oppress Muslims and to wage jihad against officials of governments that he believes are anti-Muslim, including the U.S. government. Ultimately, Bickford decided that he would not travel overseas and instead turned his attention to an attack here in the United States. This decision resulted in Bickford perpetrating his attack in Times Square on New Year's Eve in 2022.

Near the scene of the attack, law enforcement officers recovered a book from Bickford's backpack with the following passage highlighted: "Fight in the Name of Allah and in the Cause of Allah. Fight against those who do not believe in Allah. Wage a holy war."

In addition, Bickford had used an encrypted application and secure browser on his cellphone to conduct extensive research in advance of his attack, including research about al Qaeda (including internet

searches for "Al Qaeda recruitment"); about waging jihad; about his eventual time (New Year's Eve) and place (Times Square) of attack (including "how often do the police patrol in NYC" and "New Years Eve 2023 itinerary in New York City Times Square"); about potential weapons he could use to carry out his attack (including "[g]un buying laws for New York City" and "Do you need to pass a background check for a used gun"); and various ways to incapacitate, injure, and kill his potential targets (including "[w]hat are the terms for taking slaves in Islam" and whether Islam "permit[s] rape of female prisoners of war").

Finally, less than an hour before his attack, Bickford watched an Al Qaeda propaganda video imploring viewers to "fight" as he finalized his targets.

The FBI New York Joint Terrorism Task Force, which consists of investigators and analysts from the FBI, the NYPD, and over 50 other federal, state, and local agencies, investigated the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Matthew J.C. Hellman, Sarah L. Kushner, and Kaylan E. Lasky for the Southern District of New York are prosecuting the case, with valuable assistance from Trial Attorney D. Andrew Sigler of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section.

MASS SHOOTING UPDATE

Information recent as of 5-14-2024 at 12 p.m.

2024 Mass Shooting Stats: (Source: Mass Shooting Tracker, <https://www.massshootingtracker.site/data/?year=2024>)

- Total Mass Shootings: 194
- Total Dead: 271
- Total Wounded: 730
- Shootings Per Day: 1.44
- Days Reached in Year 2024 as of May 14: 135

WORLD GAZANS UPROOTED AFTER RAFAH INCURSION



Large parts of the city of Rafah are now a "ghost town," with UN humanitarians reporting on May 14 that some 450,000 Gazans have been forcibly displaced from the southernmost city by Israeli evacuation orders in the last week.

"Empty streets in Rafah as families continue to flee in search of safety... UNRWA estimates that nearly 450,000 people have been forcibly displaced from Rafah since 6 May," said the UN agency for Palestinian refugees in a post from western Rafah on X.

"Inland in Rafah is now a ghost town. It's hard to believe there were over one million people sheltering here just a week ago," reported UNRWA spokesperson Louise Wateridge. "People face constant exhaustion, hunger and fear. Nowhere is safe. An immediate ceasefire is the only hope."

The development comes as airstrikes continued to hit northern and southern Gaza amid reports that the Israeli military said it had hit 120 targets in the past 24-hour period.

"Ground incursions and heavy fighting continue to be reported in eastern Rafah as well Gaza City and the Jabaliya refugee camp," the UN aid coordination office, OCHA, said in its latest situation update late May 13.

Many of those forced to leave eastern Rafah had already been displaced multiple times in the past seven months, the UN office explained.

In the north, evacuation orders were also issued on Saturday "amid ongoing Israeli bombardment there," OCHA said, noting that some 100,000 people have left their homes and shelters so far.

"OCHA remains deeply concerned about the lack of protection for civilians and the lack of safety for humanitarian operations," the UN agency said, noting that one fifth of Gaza's pop-

(Continued on page 13)

COALITION HOLDS PRO-PALESTINE PROTEST AT RUTGERS-NEWARK LAW SCHOOL

By Lev D. Zilbermintz

NEWARK - Students from Rutgers - Newark (R-N), New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) and their allies have organized an encampment and a protest on the grounds of the R-N Law School Building.

“Local Talk” tried at least three times to get protest organizers to answer questions sent via email. The R-N encampment was visited by “Local Talk” three times in one week. It was not until May 13 that a response that received from the protesters’ media team.

Newark Solidarity Coalition Statement

According to a press release put out by the Newark Solidarity Coalition on May 6, “Last week, as part of the national and international movement for universities to divest in Israel, community members of Newark, New Jersey established a Pro-Palestinian encampment at Rutgers University Law School. Organizers of the Newark Solidarity Coalition have organized teach-ins, food-shares, multi-faith religious services, and events explaining the importance of supporting Palestinian liberation and its local connection to Newark.

Israel’s collective punishment of Gaza nears seven months and continued last night with evacuation orders and intense bombardment of Rafah, where over 1.5 million displaced Palestinians fled.

Rutgers administrators fell short in meeting the most urgent and critical demand to divest from any firm or corporation materially participating in, benefiting from, or otherwise supporting Israel’s ongoing genocide and occupation of Palestine and the Palestinian people.”

8 Demands Accepted by Rutgers-New Brunswick

The Daily Targum reported that at the Rutgers-New Brunswick campus, the administration accepted eight demands. According to the Daily Targum, the accepted demands are as follows.

- Accept at least 10 displaced Gazans to finish their studies at Rutgers
- Plan to create an Arab Cultural Center by the beginning of the Fall 2024 semester
- Establish a greater scholarly partnership with Birzeit University in the West Bank
- Name "Palestine" and "Palestinians" in all University communications, rather than calling the area the "Middle East" or "Gaza region" in reference to "Israeli aggressions in Palestine"
- Develop training and hire senior administrators to combat anti-Palestinian, anti-Arab and anti-Muslim racism for administrators and staff
- Create a Department of Middle East Studies and hire faculty
- Display flags of Palestinian, Kurdish, Kashmiri and other disputed territories on Rutgers campuses
- Grant full amnesty to all faculty, staff, student organizations and students for participating in the demonstrations and encampment over the past week.

Faculty will not be fired or face reduced compensation, and students will not be reprimanded unless they have violated University policy.

According to the Daily Targum, “One of two requests

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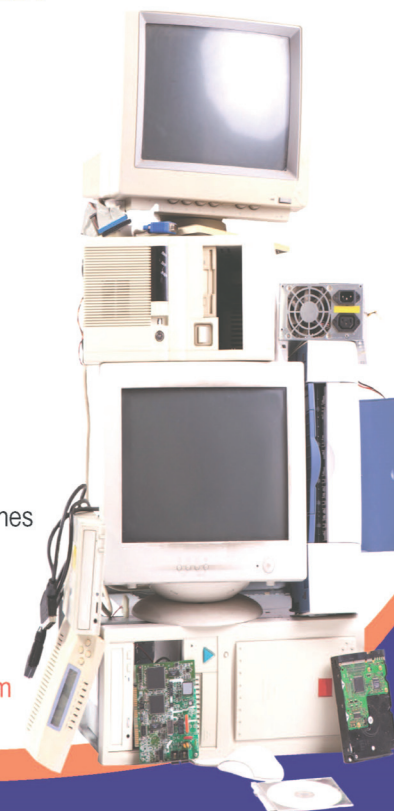
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Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr., Essex County Executive, The Essex County Board of Commissioners and the Essex County Utilities Authority

that are still in contention pertains to divestment from businesses that support the State of Israel and its continued killing and bombardment of Gaza and Palestinians. The request was received by the administration, and further review is currently underway.”

The other request, which appears to be denied, is the termination of Rutgers' partnership with Tel Aviv University and the HELIX Innovation Hub. In response, the University stated, "Agreements with global partners are a matter of scholarly inquiry."

Tents were erected by the School of Public Administration and Arts (SPAA) building, right opposite the 1999 law school building on Washington Street. The tents came in various colors:

blue, light green and gray, as well as many others.

Unlike tent encampments at universities across the country, the one at Rutgers-Newark showed a certain amount of discipline. Certain tents were set aside for specific purposes. One tent served as “The People’s Electric Law School.” Another tent served as a library. It held books on various subjects in bins and various boxes.

Many tents had writing on them. These included slogans such as “From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be Free”, “Sudan for Palestine,” “Clean Water is a Right”, “NO COPS, no Islamophobia, no anti-blackness, no antisemitism, no queerphobia.”

(Continued on page 12)

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Essex County College Preparing Students for Careers in Fiber Optics



At PACE program signing from left, Dr. Elvy Viera, ECC Dean of Community, Continuing Education & Workforce Development; James Walker of RampUp America; ECC President Dr. Augustine A. Boakye; Derrick E. Law of Net Tarius Technology Solutions; and Garth Naar of Avatar Tech

ECC officials and RampUp America representatives at the signing ceremony. Photos Courtesy ECC

Essex County College is the lead partner in a state funded Fiber Optics Technicians Pre-Apprenticeship in Career Education (PACE) program. This part-

nership will create a pathway into the burgeoning telecommunications sector.

The College received a \$502,998 New Jersey Depart-

ment of Labor and Workforce Development grant for the program, geared to enroll and train 45 historically underrepresented students and adult learners for the fiber optics industry.

The first group of 15 students will begin classes for eight

weeks at the College in July, said Dr. Elvy Vieira, Dean of Community, Continuing Education & Workforce Development. The students will also work as pre-apprentices in the fiber optics and broadband industry as

(Continued on page 12)



DISCLAIMER: The following items are primarily drawn from first responders. Responders' accounts may not be their full activity range. Grand juries hand down indictments when evidence presented them warrant a trial. Named suspects/defendants are innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

NEWARK - The Newark Public Schools Board of Education more than approved the replacement of its internal surveillance cameras among its 65 buildings at their April 25 meeting.

They awarded a \$12 million contract to Turn-Key Technologies, of Sayreville, to install 7,700 cameras between June 30 and Aug. 31. All 7,700 cameras, for the first time, will have artificial intelligence capabilities.

Turn-Key's new system, including its servers, will enhance facial recognition, help detect weapons and can read car license plates across the street. It was one of three bidders seeking to replace NPS' current system, in April.

The \$12 million NPS will be spending includes the last of the federally-granted COVID relief funds - which are set to expire Aug. 31.

TKT's system is to work with a second new system, by Avigilon, that has been earlier approved and is being installed. The Avigilon system uses HALO sensors to detect gun sounds, vape smoke and "abnormal noise."

School Business Administrator Valerie Wilson, April 25, said that the images and data gathered by TKT and Avigilon will be kept from the public domain. None of the 7,700 cameras will be installed in restrooms or shower rooms.

"Cameras and devices," said Wilson, "will not and cannot be

placed in areas that are not approved and authorized."

IRVINGTON - "Local Talk" presumes that the remains of a North Carolina driver, killed in a six-car collision here on the Garden State Parkway April 17, has been returned to his relatives.

Tarron Francis, 41, of Brattleboro, NC, said a State Police spokesman at the Bloomfield Barracks, was driving his Nissan SUV at about 12:45 a.m. that Wednesday.

Francis had stopped when a line of cars, waiting to exit, began to form in the right hand lane at Milepost 145.1. The traffic backup was a mile south of Exit 144 for South Orange Avenue.

A Dodge behind Francis rear-ended his SUV, starting a chain reaction crash also involving a pair of Toyota SUVs, a GMC SUV and a Kia car.

Francis was declared dead at the scene. The Dodge driver was taken to a local hospital for treatment of moderate injuries.

EAST ORANGE - City police detectives are investigating the May 8 robbery of a major intersection's service station.

Employees of the Phillips 66 at 100 Central Ave. told responding EOPD officers that three men pulled up by one of their gas pumps at about 11:45 p.m. that Wednesday.

The trio proceeded to rob the employees and then sped east on Central Avenue towards Newark. Although the workers believed that the suspects were armed, no one was injured.

EOPD has not said how much in cash or other assets were taken as of press time.

Located on the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Grove Street, the Phillips 66 is the latest filling station there since the mid-1960s. It started life as a Mobile station styled by noted designer Raymond Lowey.

ExxonMobile sold the station to Lukoil in the 1990s as part of the federal government's approval of the two oil giants' merger. Controversy to Lukoil's Russian ties and a garage fire prompted station owners to switch to Phillips 66, of Tulsa, Okla., in 2023.

ORANGE - Last rites for former Orange Municipal Court

Judge and retired Superior Court -Newark Judge Harold W. Fullilove, Sr., includes a 10:30 a.m. visitation and Noon funeral May 22 at Newark's Bethany Baptist Church, where he was a deacon.

Fullilove, who was on the Orange bench 1988-91 until his superior court appointment, died April 22. The New Orleans native came to the Newark-Orange area by way of outside education, the U.S. Army and the Columbia University School of Law.

Fullilove graduated from Hillside's Pingry School and Lehigh University before attaining his juris doctorate degree in Columbia in 1976. He served a tour in Vietnam for the Army between Lehigh graduation and Columbia enrollment 1967-70. He first clerked for the Hon. Van Y. Clinton before working for the Essex County Prosecutor's Office 1973-76.

He was working for Love & Randall, LLC and in the Newark Corporation Counsel Office before he and attorney Richard L. Bland formed Fullilove & Bland, Esqs., LLC in 1984.

Fullilove was meanwhile admitted to the New Jersey Bar in 1973 and qualified to present cases before the U.S. District Court-New Jersey in 1973, the U.S. Court of Appeals Third Circuit in 1985 and the New Jersey Supreme Court in 1985.

Fullilove became Essex County's Presiding Criminal Court Judge and was Chairman of the New Jersey Supreme Court Standing Committee on Minority Concerns. The Garden State Bar Association and North Jersey Men's Club member was honored for being a 50-year bar member in October 2023.

Wife Patricia, sons Harold W., Jr., Aaron and Gregory plus Dimitri Smith, brothers Robert III and Eric and nine grandchildren are among his survivors.

Arrangements were made here by Woody's Home for Services. Memorial donations may be made to the Bethany Baptist Church Scholarship Fund.

WEST ORANGE - An Orange Valley resident not only complained about curbside parking in her neighborhood before the Township Council May 7 but also suggested a solution.

Pilott Place resident Joy Bur-

nett presented a petition before township elders and Police Chief Jim Abbot to expand the neighborhood parking permit area to include Pilott and Glen. Local daytime parking permits are being applied to Seton Hall Preparatory High School students' cars.

Pilott and Glen are two of seven one block streets that are framed by Rollinson Place and Kingsley Street/Valley Road - where the St. Mark's Square neighborhood meets Orange Valley. SHP day student parking presents a problem for Burnett and her son and daughter since she does not have a driveway.

"I don't even come home for lunch because I can't park at my house," said Burnett. "My daughter comes home for lunch; my son works at night and comes home for the day - where there is nowhere to park. They park on Glen (but) we cannot park there because we don't have permits to park there; there are no permits on Pilott."

Burnett and her children got six parking tickets for their trouble. SHP students meanwhile park their cars illegally on Pilott and within 50 feet of its corner with Rollinson. She said that her permit application was denied.

Burnett has talked with Chief Abbott and with Council Members Tammy Williams and Susan Scarpa. Chief Abbott said that he wanted to conduct a traffic study for the township's east side.

FATAL FIRE: One news outlet has said that two of the three people who were pulled out of a 12:18 a.m. May 14 St. Cloud townhouse fire have died at the nearby Cooperman-Barnabas Medical Center. The man and woman were given CPR when they were pulled out from a basement unit of the Northfield Townhouses here at 585 Northfield Ave.

SOUTH ORANGE - Relatives of Broadway theater stage manager Thomas J. Gates, 51, who was struck and killed by an eastbound NJTransit train here May 8, are making his funeral arrangements as of press time.

Around 1,000 NJTransit Morris & Essex Line riders, including those on the Gladstone Branch, experienced delays up to 60 minutes in both directions from 9:10 a.m. to 1:22 p.m. that

(Continued on page 11)

MAY 14 ELECTIONS

(Continued from page 1)

votes or 6.65 percent.

Warren's three incumbent at-large council members also saw success.

Adrienne Wooten was the night's top vote-getter at 1,722 or 33.78. Voters placed Weldon M. "Monty" Montague III second at 1,704 or 33.34 and Clifford Ross third with 1,671 or 32.78.

How current Orange Board of Education member Derrick Henry's write-in campaign fared is not officially known. The County Clerk's Election Night Reporting postings stopped carrying write-in votes since changing software vendors.

MONTCLAIR voters chose former Fourth Ward Councilwoman Dr. Renee E. Baskerville as the township's first African American woman mayor. Her "Together Montclair" team, however, received two of the six Township Council seats up for grabs.

Baskerville, whose doctor's office is in East Orange, drew 3,334 votes or 52.31 percent. "Change That Works" campaigner attorney Chrissy M. Thomas tallied 3,039 votes or 47.69 percent.

Baskerville risked losing her council seat in vying for Mayor against Sean Spiller in 2020 - and lost by 156 votes. Montclair, like Newark, holds "all at once" mayor-council elections every four years.

Spiller, however, decided not to run for re-election earlier this year. Most of the other council

incumbents chose or had pledged not to run again, leaving At-Large Councilman Robert J. "Bob" Russo to pursue re-election.

At Large Council (Pick Two)

Russo - after two decades as councilman, Mayor or Deputy Mayor - found himself on the outside looking in after 8 p.m. Tuesday. The "Montclair Good Government Team" leader got 3,299 votes, or 30.42 percent, for third place.

"Team Montclair's" Susan Shin Anderson amassed 3,863 or 35.62 33.95 for the first at-large seat. Carmel Loughman on the "MGG Team" earned 3,682 or 33.95, got the other at-large seat.

Ward Council

In the First Ward Council race, "Clean Government Advocate" soloist Erik D'Amato won the seat with 1,051 or 59.75. "Team Montclair" runner Shivaun Gaines gained 708 votes or 40.25 percent.

The Second Ward seat went to Eileen Birmingham. The "Genuinely Cares." campaigner carried 1,369 or 72.74. "MGGT" runner Ilmar Vanderer got 526 or 27.76.

"TM" running mate Rahun Williams won the Third Ward seat, outdrawing the other ticket slate and an independent.

Williams won 551 votes or 44.02. "MGGT" member Roddy Moore mustered 472 or 39.56. Wendy A. Tiburico, of "A New Perspective / Una Nueva Perspectiva" tallied 201 or 16.42.

Aminah Toler won the Fourth Ward seat over two other independents. Toler's total, as of 10:01 p.m. Tuesday, is 594 or 32.16. Zina Floyd, "As One We Win," at 481 or 34.14, placed second. Former Essex County Prosecutor Patricia A. Hurt, "Time for a Change," rounded out the balloted field with 334 or 23.70.

Neither Baskerville's "TM" nor Russo's "MGGT" platform fielded a candidate here.

In IRVINGTON, a majority of voters returned Mayor Anthony "Tony" Vauss' TIS incumbents over three Ward Seat challengers.

North Ward voters validated Orlando Glen Vick's new term with 396 or 80.32. "North Ward United Progress Ignited," soloist Yasmin Jones received 87 or 19.68.

South Ward returned Jamilah Z. Beasley with 396 or 93.30. Challenger "Team New Irvington South Ward" Danouchka Desir. got 27 votes for 6.70 percent.

East Ward voters kept Dr. October Hudley on council call with 253 or 62.56. Yasmina King, of "East Ward Your Voice Our Mission," carried 158 or 38.44.

The West Ward council election, barring any write-in submissions, was literally "One Man, One Vote." Incumbent Vernon Cox got all 294 votes.

BELLEVILLE's Council Ward elections, depending on whether one sides with Mayor Michale Melham's "A Better Belleville" team or one of the two successful independent can-

didates, may be seen as a glass half-full or half-empty.

In the First Ward, voters selected "Believe in Belleville" candidate Tracy Juanita Williams over "ABB" runner Patricia Inaugurato to succeed the late Marie Strumolo-Burke.

Williams, who was endorsed by Strumolo-Burke, won 286 or 60.72 percent Belleville Planning Board President Inaugurato drew 185 or 29.28.

In the Second Ward, enough voters believed in Frank Velez's "Believe in Belleville." platform to grant them their council seat.

Velez mastered 519 or 54.40 percent of the vote. "ABB" member Victor D. Mesce was second at 388 or 40.67. Gary Hinton, who is "For a Better Belleville", tallied 47 or 4.93.

The Third Ward election was another "One Man, One Vote." Incumbent Vincent Cozzarelli carried all 190. Although Cozzarelli has sided with ABB, he did not so identify himself on his ballot place.

Fourth Ward voters backed "ABB" running mate Diana Sorice Guardabasco over former Board of Education Trustee Michael J. Sheldon. Guardabasco garnered 307 or 66.74. Sheldon, "A True Fighter for Belleville," mustered 153 or 33.26.

NUTLEY voters returned all five commissioners - and may have unofficially selected the township's mayor.

John V. Kelly III, "Bringing Nutley Values to Future Generations," was May 14's top vote-getter at 3,120 or 17.32. Kelly may become Nutley's next

(Continued on page 15)

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 10)

Wednesday.

M&E Train No. 6324 Summit to New York Penn Station local had struck Gates while it was slowing into South Orange Station at 9:07 a.m. The 10 double-decker car and electric locomotive set, intended for NYPS arrival at 9:42 a.m., had its crew and 60 passengers aboard.

South Orange Police Chief Ernesto Morillo said that his officers promptly arrived at the station by 9:12. They were met by members of the South Essex

Fire Department and South Orange Rescue Squad, whose headquarters are across Solan Street from the station.

Authorities had declared Gates dead before NJ Transit Police came to take over the accident scene and, later, the ECPO accident investigation unit. Local eastbound Track 2, which 6324 was using, was deactivated between South Orange and East Orange stations.

"Local Talk" happened to board eastbound Dover-NYPS train No. 6628 at Brick Church when it had pulled onto its westbound track at 10:53 a.m. Some 50 riders scrambled from Brick

Church's center platform to board the waiting 10 single-decker Comet car set. 6628, which was due at Newark Broad Street at 10:03 a.m., arrived at 11:02.

Gates was commuting to Manhattan's St. James Theatre, where he has been stage managing "Illinoise" since April 24. The play's May 8 production of the Tony-nominated musical was canceled.

BEAR SIGHTING: Residents along the village's Walton Avenue and Thornton Place and West Orange's Lawrence Street reported seeing a bear roaming about 7 - 9:18 a.m. May 13,

causing the South Orange-Maplewood School District to suspend all outdoor activities until 2:53 p.m. The bear had reportedly wandered back into the South Mountain Reservation.

MAPLEWOOD - A "Local Talk" delivery crew was preparing for its May 9 run at 11:15 a.m. when they saw a South Orange Rescue Squad ambulance, Irvington and Newark fire engines and several plainclothes first responders' cars speed west on Springfield Avenue and turn left turn at Burnett Avenue.

They and at least one heli-
(Continued on page 14)

PROTEST (Continued from page 7)

Diverse participation

At the protest held May 7, “Local Talk” saw white, black, Asian, Hispanic participants. Many students were dressed in the white and black checkered keffiyehs, or headgear. Other participants wore red-and-white keffiyehs. When asked, sources told “Local Talk” that Jewish Voice for Peace, a Jewish organization, also participated in the protest.

Encampment guidelines.

Library

“Local Talk” saw a sign with “Encampment Guidelines” which were posted outside of a tent. These guidelines regulated behavior in the encampment.

The library had numerous flyers and pamphlets that were published by Communist and Socialist organizations, and others. These included the Revolutionary Communists of America, SonSocialists, Newark Solidarity Coalition, and other groups.

According to their own statement, “The Newark Solidarity Coalition is a coalition of students, faculty, and community members based in Newark who stand in solidarity with oppressed peoples throughout the world. Its mission is to draw connections between the shared struggles under capitalism and colonialism that we experience

internationally, domestically, and locally. We create spaces for community discussions and educational programming, and facilitate direct actions in response to colonial, capitalist, and white supremacist violence at home and abroad.”

Flyers published call for escalating, not decreasing, protests

The flyers themselves called for escalating, not decreasing, the protests. One flyer was titled “Organize the Intifada: A Communist Program for Escalating the Gaza Solidarity Movement.” Simply put, the flyer said that more demonstrations, sit-ins, takeovers were necessary until the goal of divesting from Israel was achieved.

A second flyer, published by the Newark Solidarity Coalition, was titled, “Rutgers, New Jersey and Israel: complicity in Genocide.” The flyer was described on cover as “a starter guide for the curious individual.” It gave examples to illustrate the argument that Rutgers University and the State of New Jersey were connected to Israel. These examples included Rutgers’ partnership with Israel; the New Jersey anti-BDS law passed by huge majorities in 2016; the amount of money donated by AIPAC to New Jersey representatives in the state legislature and the U.S. Congress.

May 7 Protest

On May 7, “Local Talk” saw students and their allies gather by the law school to hear speakers.

The speakers urged their audience to fight for a free Palestine; demand a permanent ceasefire in Gaza; the removal of the Israel Defense Force from Gaza; increased international aid to Gaza; fight for justice; and other issues.

Protesters held signs that read, “No taxes for genocide”, “Free Palestine”, “F--k Biden”, “Disclose, Divest,” “Eyes on Rafah”, and others.

A female protester, clad in mask, glasses, and a keffiyeh, held up the black-red-yellow-green Palestinian flag on a staff. The flag had the design of the Dome of Rock on it, along with Arabic writing.

Three Orthodox Jews, dressed in traditional black pants, hats and jackets, stood at the protest. They held up a Palestinian flag. It was not clear if the trio was from the Israel-denying Neturei Karta or some other group. “American Muslims for Palestine” also had flyers at the protest.

Demands made by Newark Solidarity Coalition

Newark Solidarity Coalition emailed “Local Talk” on May 13 a list of eight demands that it wants Rutgers University New-

ark to accept. These demands will be the subject of a separate article.

“Local Talk” attempted to speak to protesters. One, Shakir McDougald, gave “Local Talk” a small interview at the end of the Newark Municipal Council Meeting on May 8.

Interview

When asked how he related to the Palestinian protest, Mr. McDougald said, “I am an American and we stand up for people being victimized. There is settlements in the West Bank. The settlements in the West Bank are part and parcel of the issue.”

When asked about divestment, Mr. McDougald said, “Divestment can occur because the same U.S. government is requiring TikTok to divest. What’s good for the goose is good for the gander.”

When asked about the October 7, 2023 massacre of Israelis by Hamas terrorists, Mr. McDougald said that the problem lay deeper.

“It (the Israeli - Palestinian conflict) started before October 7,” Mr. McDougald said.

According to Mr. McDougald, he is a Bloomfield College, class of 2023 graduate, a Criminal Justice / Sociology major.

“Local Talk” emailed Mr. McDougald additional questions to answer, but he did not respond as of press time.

ECC FIBER OPTICS

(Continued from page 9)

part of their training. The initiative is known as Fiber Optic Careers Unlock Success (FOCUS), she said.

Dr. Vieira said that in order to make the initiative a success, the College joined forces with RampUP America, Inc. RampUp has a collaborative alliance with the Minority Business Enterprises NetTarius Technology Solutions, LLC, and Avatar Tech LLC, both Newark-based networking infrastructure firms.

These companies will offer pre-apprenticeship positions for the students.

Derrick E. Law, President of NetTarius, said the program will lead to industry credentials, apprenticeship opportunities, and eventual employment. “This program is ideal for those starting out in fiber optics and for career advancement. The industry is growing tremendously. We are looking at an increase of 400,000 jobs in the field over the next few years.”

Mr. Law said it is important

for people to have stackable credentials in order to move up in the industry. “That’s what RampUp is about. We want individuals to ramp up their credentials for career advancement.” He said the goal of the program is really focused in four areas:

- Creating a pathway to certifications
- Pre-apprentice training
- Paid apprenticeship training
- Full time job placement

ECC’s President, Dr. Augustine A Boakye, stated that the

FOCUS program is a comprehensive plan of action covering training, work experience, connection to a Registered Apprenticeship, and ongoing support services.

The program was officially launched recently at a meeting and agreement signing on the College’s West Essex campus with ECC officials and RampUp America representatives. Garth Naar from Avatar Tech, and James Walker from RampUp America, Inc., along with Mr. Law, attended the event.

WORLD NEWS

(Continued from page 6)

ulation had been displaced in just the last week.

“Civilians must be protected and have their basic needs met, whether they move or stay. Those who leave must have enough time to do so as well as a safe route and a safe place to go.”

Deep concerns remain about a lack of lifesaving aid reaching the enclave since Israeli troops seized the Rafah crossing and restricted access to the nearby Kerem Shalom crossing last week in response to a deadly rocket attack by Hamas fighters.

“The Rafah crossing remains closed,” OCHA said, “and there is a continued lack of safe and logistically viable access to the Kerem Shalom crossing.”

Echoing fears for the people of Gaza, the UN World Health Organization (WHO) reported that the incursion into Rafah had jeopardized access to health care, the provision of health services and the delivery of lifesaving supplies.

The UN health agency noted that partners working on medical relief in Gaza “require a minimum of 46,000 liters of fuel every day just for their operations.”

In a related development, UN agencies pushed back at erroneous claims that the number of Gazans killed and injured had been scaled down after the enclave’s ministry of health announced that some 25,000 of the 35,000 reported fatalities have now been identified.

“We’re basically talking about 35,000 people who are dead, and really that’s all that matters, isn’t it? We know that many of those are women and children, and there are thousands missing under the rubble,” said Liz Throssell, spokesperson for the UN human rights office, OHCHR, in response to journalists’ questions in Geneva.

Echoing that message, WHO insisted that the system of verification of the dead by the ministry of health would necessarily take time, given that in Gaza, the “numbers are huge.”

An estimated 18,000 individuals have yet to be identified or found, comprising 10,000 whose bodies have been recovered and another 8,000 who have not, said WHO spokesperson Christian Lindmeier.

Of the 24,686 identified fatalities, 40 percent were men (10,006), 20 percent were women (4,959) and 32 percent were children (7,797). In a separate category, the elderly accounted for eight percent of all identified deaths (1,924), Mr. Lindmeier explained.

Among the 10,000 unidentified victims, the WHO official suggested that there was a “high likelihood” of finding the bodies of more women and children from destroyed houses, “because they are the ones staying at home, while the men are out looking for food, looking for business and supplies” for their families.

UN Secretary - General António Guterres is appalled by the escalation of Israeli military activity in and around Rafah in southern Gaza, his spokesperson said in a statement on May 14.

“These developments are further impeding humanitarian access and worsening an already dire situation. At the same time, Hamas goes on firing rockets indiscriminately,” the statement said.

Stressing that civilians must be respected and protected at all times, Mr. Guterres noted that “for people in Gaza, nowhere is safe now.”

The Secretary-General reiterated his longstanding urgent appeal for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire and for the release of all hostages.

He also called for the Rafah crossing to be re-opened immediately and for unimpeded humanitarian access throughout Gaza.

**UNITED KINGDOM
UK BANS SIX OPIOIDS**

The UK government will place six new synthetic opioids under the strictest level of control to help prevent drug related deaths in the UK and ensure an-



one caught supplying these substances faces tougher penalties. This comes after 15 other synthetic opioids (including 14 nitazenes) were controlled as Class A drugs earlier this year.

On May 14, the government has written to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD), responding to and accepting their advice to control 6 acyl piperazine opioids and derivatives, including 2-methyl-AP-237, as Class A drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Placing these substances under the strictest control is a clear message to anyone involved in production or supply of these drugs that they will face the full force of the law - including up to life in prison, an unlimited fine, or both. As Class A drugs, possession will carry a maximum penalty of up to 7 years in prison, an unlimited fine, or both.

To future-proof laws and respond to new emerging threats the government has also accepted the ACMD’s advice to add a generic definition for nitazenes. This will mean new nitazenes detected in the UK will automatically be controlled as Class A drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Crime and Policing Minister Chris Philp said, “We are highly alert to the threat posed by these drugs which is why we are enhancing our surveillance and early warning. The devastation we have seen in other countries from synthetic opioids cannot be allowed to happen here in the UK.

“This is another step in our response. Not only are we sending a clear message that the consequences for peddling these drugs will be severe, but we are adapting our legislation to ensure we are able to respond rapidly to any new emerging threat.”

The 6 new synthetic opioids which will be made Class A drugs under the Misuse of Drugs

Act 1971 are:

- 2-methyl-AP-237
- AP-237
- para-methyl-AP-237
- AP-238
- azaprocin
- para-nitroazaprocin

The government has also accepted the ACMD’s advice to control 15 novel benzodiazepines and related compounds as Class C drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. These are:

- gidazepam
- desalkylgidazepam
- methylelonazepam
- cloniprazepam
- difludiazepam
- thionordazepam
- clobromazolam
- 4’-chloro-deschloroalprazolam
- fluclozepam
- deschloroclotizolam
- flubrotizolam
- fluetizolam
- bentazepam
- bretazenil
- rilmazafone

The government intends to introduce legislation to implement the necessary amendments to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001 and the Misuse of Drugs (Designation) (England, Wales and Scotland) Order 2015 as soon as possible, subject to Parliamentary approval.

The UK is enhancing its surveillance and early warning system, which will improve the ability to track dangerous drugs that reach our streets in real-time, including those listed here. This includes state-of-the-art monitoring for the presence of synthetic drugs by analyzing wastewater or recording spikes in overdoses in specific locations.

These findings will be cascaded down to law enforcement and public health agencies, at national and local level, meaning rapid action can be taken in communities where they are detected.

The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

MY MAMA SAID

One of the things that my mother often told us, which I say to my own children to this day, is, "You have what you say, so watch what you say." Another is, "If you like it, I love it!" - Andrea Dialect

MAMA SAID (Part 2)

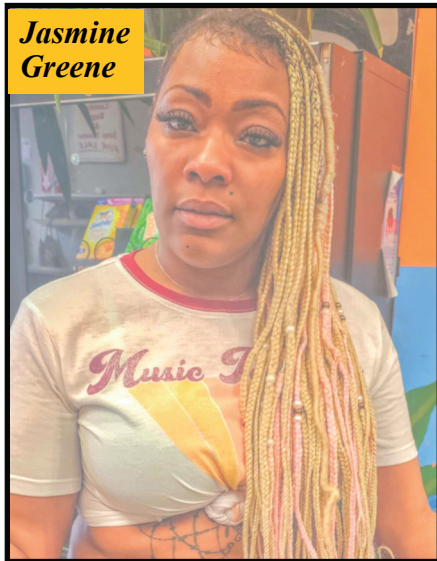
My mother said what happens in this house, stays in this house - Jasmine

Jasmine: When my mom says something like your Mom's "If you like it, I love it," she's essentially saying, "I have given you all the information I can, and if that's what you choose to do, go ahead and then deal with

the consequences." There was something else that my Mom used to say, but I can't exactly recall how the phrase went, but essentially it goes, "Everybody that tells you 'yes' is not your friend, and everybody who tells you 'no' is not the enemy."

"No" can sometimes save your life. I remember one time there was a party at my high school, and my Mother told me no, I couldn't go, and I was devastated. You know, as a young girl, when you can't make it to the school party, you're devastated. It was the end of the world; my life was over.

That night my friends had gotten into a huge fight at that party, and nine times out of ten, I would have been right with them. They had this huge brawl, and people had to be picked up by their parents at the police station. Whew, glad I missed that



Jasmine Greene

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 11)

copter were joining all South Essex Fire Department hands and Maplewood police for a house fire here at 88 Burnett Ave. SEFD Squad 32 and Fire Chief Joseph Alvarez had found the two-story house "heavily engulfed" by flames just after 11 a.m. Wednesday and pulled what became four alarms.

It took members of the SEFD, Irvington, Newark, East Orange, Orange, West Orange, Union and Hillside 3.5 hours to control the fire, hampered by 80-degree temperature, fire volume and zero visibility. 88 Burnett is between an apartment building and a townhouse, limiting access.

Units from Bloomfield, Belleville, Summit and Springfield - some of who went out on five other calls - covered SEFD's stations.

The State Fire Marshal and the ECPO fire investigation unit are seeking the fire's cause. Homeowner April Smith said that she saw smoking coming from the vacant front

bedroom room of her house.

Smith and the other three people at that time safely evacuated without injury; no serious injuries were reported among first responders. She and her seven family members have lost the house.

Somashareseveryday@gmail.com has started a GoFundMe.com page and a clothing drive; details are with SOMA Shares. The American Red Cross chapter has found temporary housing for them.

BLOOMFIELD - Although the Bloomfield police report did not say which Newark Light Rail station was where they met some juveniles May 1, they arrested two of them there on suspicion of committing a nearby assault and robbery.

Responding BPD officers met a man at the Franklin Square Shopping Plaza that Wednesday who said that he just was beaten and robbed. He said that he was crossing the Stop and Shop parking lot when he was approached by a group of youths.

SLEEP LITTLE BABY

Artist statement:
When I'm unable to come up with any ideas for my next project I can always refer back to doing observational poses of my family, particularly when they're sleeping because they are completely incapable of sitting still when they are awake. For my mother all it

takes is a knock on the door for her to completely forget that she is posing. Then she'd likely strike up a two hour conversation with laughter and head bobbing. With this I ask myself why bother when they refuse to cooperate? Why not wait till they fall asleep...
©2007 Dominant Dansby. All Rights Reserved. (This article is being utilized as an enhancement tool. Errors and omissions are to be expected.)
Andrea L. Dansby Publications. Reading Advocates for Literacy. (ontariotalkjournal.com)



Photo By Dominant Dansby

one, because if I had to tell my mom to pick me up at the police station at fifteen, I would have been like, "Officer, can I stay here? Because I'm not calling her."

I am more afraid of my Mom than the police. It's like, "Y'all can't beat me, she can." All that "you can't whip your child legally." She always told me that she brought me into the world, and she could take me out. I believed her, lol. That type of accountability was one of the best gifts that my Mom gave me. That's why I'm smiling, and even when my Mom is wrong, she's right.

I treat my Mom's advice like one of those old school rolodex they used on a desk. I treat my

mom's advice like that even when it doesn't apply to what I'm going through right now, I just log it, because I might have to go to it for a whole new situation. I'd just go to my rolodex. I log everything that my Mom says in my brain. It's locked in my memory. ...

Read this article in its entirety at www.localtalkweekly.com and type The Observation Booth, Andrea Dialect and/or Entertainment Section in the search bar. If you are interested in participating in a challenge, project sharing a topic, news or if you have any questions, comments or concerns, send them to localtalkandrea@gmail.com.

Two of the group threw their victim on to the ground and began to punch and kick him. They stole his cell phone and backpack before leaving. Officers on the lookout soon found the group at either Grove Street Station or at Belleville's Silver Lake Station. Two of them had the victim's backpack and cell phone.

Two of the group - a 15-year-old from Bloomfield and a 14-year-old from East Orange - were identified and arrested. The boys were taken to the Judge Vincent Colasanti Public Safety Headquarters for processing and release with a municipal court date.

Three BPD Cops Hurt in Pursuit

Bloomfield police officers, in a developing story, said that they began pursuing a reportedly stolen BMW SUV from the township at 1:40 a.m. May 13 into their Newark colleagues' North and West Wards. Their pursuit ended in a pair of accidents along

(Continued on page 15)

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 14)

South Orange Avenue between Oraton Parkway and Grove Street at 1:50 a.m. Three BPD cruisers and two civilian cars were involved; three Bloomfield officers and one civilian were reported as injured. The suspected SUV driver and the BMW remain at large as of that Monday afternoon.

MONTCLAIR - Anyone who had interfaced with the township's website when it was hacked and held for ransomware around June 1, 2023 got to learn from the town manager's letter mailed April 22-25 how bad that cyberattack was.

Interim Town Manager Michael Lapolla mailed letters to 17,835 affected residents, property owners, employees and others detailing what account information was exposed to the hackers. Account, driver's license and/or Social Security numbers were among the personal information "accessed and/or acquired."

This was the cyberattack on Montclair's IT Department that Mayor Sean Spiller said on June 6 was done by a "criminal group." The township's insurer, the Garden State Joint Insurance Fund, paid \$450,000 in ransom to stop the hacking in July. No ransomware group has claimed responsibility to date.

Lapolla said that an external investigation was conducted by cybersecurity experts, who produced a report on March 25. They said that the cyberattack was conducted May 22-June 1, affecting part of the township's data banks.

Montclair is offering affected constituents a year's free subscription to Experian for free credit monitoring and a toll free number - 1(888) 680-7697 - that is open 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. weekdays.

BELLEVILLE - The township's school administrators and its Board of Education Trustees may feel like they have reluctantly played in an NBA basketball playoff game that ended in a buzzer-beater.

The Belleville Public Schools and its BOET had until May 15 to provide their final 2024-25 school-year budget to the New Jersey Department of Education. The trustees failed to pass their intended 2024-25 budget - after a 3-3-1 tie vote - at their May 6 meeting.

State Monitor Tomas Egan, who BPS administrators said he had watched the BOET Monday meeting on livestream, may have become involved with the 11th-hour budget making. NJDOT had assigned Egan after BPS incurred a \$4 million deficit with its 2013-14 budget.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Richard Tomko may also have weighed in and signed off on the latest outlay. It would be

one of his last acts before the longtime superintendent leaves for the Garfield school district on June 30.

Tomko and School Business Administrator Matthew Paladino had presented a proposed 24-25 budget March 18. It included a school property tax increase of \$418 for that year based on a house with an annual assessed value of \$275,000. The increase, despite \$2.2 million in state aid, was due to hikes in health insurance premium, 5,200 extra school breakfasts and lunches and inflation.

Administrators and the Trustees' budget committee had made \$2.75 million worth of budget cuts, lowering the increase to \$171 by May 6.

Board President Gabrielle Bennett-Meany and members Lissa Missaggia and Luis Muniz voted for the May 6 budget. Vice President Nicole Daddis and trustees Michael Derro and Brenda Pacheo voted against. Panelist Tracy Williams, citing "a conflict," abstained.

NUTLEY - Township residents will be seeing more of State Monitor Jeanette Makus, whom the New Jersey Department of Education has appointed while it takes over Nutley Public Schools' finances.

Makus, who first appeared at the NPS Board of Education May 7 meeting, was formally announced by Superintendent of Schools Kent Bania that day as being on the property since May 6. The retired Bergen and Passaic county business administrator will be riding herd over the school district's fiscal records and practices.

NPS's 2023-24 school year budget is ending on June 30 with a \$7.4 million deficit due to "inaccurate budget practices" over the last two or three budgets. Nutley, for its part, has submitted a corrective action plan to NJDOE and is hoping for relief in the form of a 10 year interest-free loan from the state.

Nutley's educators have also submitted a 2024-25 budget by May 15 for state consideration. This budget was approved by the NBOE in late April, a month after rumors of the current year budget irregularities began welling up.

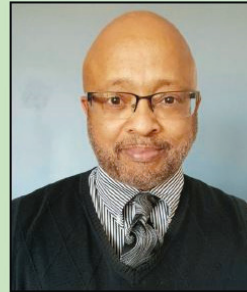
Makus will be in NPS offices and school property until the district's fiscal ship is righted - but exactly how long is an open question. NJDOE, for example, had appointed Thomas Egan to the Belleville Public Schools after it found a \$4 million deficit with the 2013-14 budget.

Egan, on one hand, had vetoed a Belleville Board of Education Trustees' resolution to sell the vacant School 1 property. (It is now the site of a Quick-Chek.) The monitor on the other hand, has had less of a personal presence in Belleville Public Schools in the last year.

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MAY 14 ELECTIONS (Continued from page 11)

mayor July 1 since the Board of Commissioners, like in Maplewood, tend to select a mayor based on the most popular votes.

Alphonse "Al" Petracco, "Honesty Integrity Experience," placed second at 2,972 or 15.60. Current Mayor Dr. Joseph P. Scarpelli, Jr., "Dr. Joe 2024," placed third at 2,896 or 16.50. Thomas J. Evans, "CPA Right Person in Right Role," was next at 2,534 or 14.06.

2020-22 Mayor Mauro G. Tucci, "Strong Proven Leader," tallied 2,854 or 15.84. He and Scarpelli agreed to trade the Mayor's seat June 30, 2022 after voters gave them the same tallies.

Challenger Maria Hamlin, "Together We Can." carried 2,365 or 13.13. Dr. Lorenzo Marchese, Jr., "DOC Larry Dedicated Organized Committed," rounded out the field at 1,276 or 7.08.



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